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BRIEFER ARTICLES

AN IMPORTANT WORK ON GARDEN BOTANY.

THE third edition of Vilmorin's *Blumengärtnerei* should be in every herbarium where important systematic work is done. It is one of the most notable contributions ever made to the botany of cultivated plants, but seems to be very little known in America, and therefore deserves extended notice. Even to those who work exclusively with wild plants, this work is a treasure, a much safer guide in many cases than antiquated floras, and a refuge for all sorts of puzzling names, particularly for names since *Index Kewensis*, and for cultivated plants. Nicholson's *Dictionary of Gardening*, an admirable work, is larger, and has more and better pictures, but the botanical work in Vilmorin's *Blumengärtnerei* has the advantage of a systematic arrangement. The arrangement in the former work is alphabetical as to genera and species; of the latter systematic and apparently De Candollean, but with an index of 78 pages, printed on tinted paper, and placed at the front of the work. Such an arrangement is infinitely more desirable for the student. The first volume of Vilmorin's *Blumengärtnerei* contains a review of the whole vegetable kingdom from the garden point of view, in 1264 pages, describing 245 families, 1474 genera, and 4049 species, and accounting for about 24,000 Latin names. The second volume, in its 244 pages, contains a great variety of matter, including a key to orders and genera, and 100 colored plates, four plants on a page. Other features are a glossary of botanical and horticultural terms; a review of the principles of horticulture in 38 pages; lists of plants suitable for special purposes; tabulated information concerning plants arranged in cultural groups, together with analytical keys and indexes galore. Unfortunately there are no references to original descriptions or to reliable pictures, a class of matter that is invaluable to the student or monographer, and which can be so abbreviated as to occupy little space. The botanist must not expect too much of the illustrations. They are mostly small (two inches each way or thereabouts), and designed to show habit. The trained botanist could dispense with the colored plates.

The chief value of the work to the systematic botanist is the modern and thorough spirit with which all the plants are described. It seems to have all the merits of German scholarship at its best. The editors are A. Siebert and A. Voss. Alfred Rehder, the young German specialist on hardy trees and shrubs, who is writing at the Arnold Arboretum for the forthcoming *Cyclopedia of American Horticulture*, declares that Voss has a wonderful first-hand knowledge of the plants that are actually cultivated in Germany. He knows both the live forms and the dried specimens. The "third edition" of Vilmorin's *Blumengärtnerei* was published in 1896 by Paul Parey, at Berlin. The name is an odd one, being suggested perhaps by trade reasons. Its connection with Vilmorin's *Les Fleurs des Pleine Terre* seems to be historical and commercial, as Vilmorin's *Blumengärtnerei* is very greatly superior to the early editions of the French work, although *Les Fleurs des Pleine Terre* has had a long, honorable, and useful career. The work of Voss does not exclude greenhouse plants, as might be imagined. It includes all the most important fruits, flowers, vegetables, and ornamental plants cultivated in Germany, and therefore really amounts to a monograph of the whole horticultural world from the German point of view. The nomenclature is probably too radical for the German seedsmen, who grow many of the flower-seeds that are circulated by American dealers. It would be hard to overpraise this work. In his studies for the *Cyclopedia of American Horticulture*, the writer has come to believe that Vilmorin's *Blumengärtnerei* is in many respects the best monograph of the garden plants of the world that has appeared in the nineteenth century.—WILHELM MILLER,
Ithaca, N. Y.

THE SOCIETY FOR PLANT MORPHOLOGY AND
PHYSIOLOGY.

YALE MEETING, DECEMBER 27, 28, 1899.

THIS society met, with the American Society of Naturalists and the affiliated scientific societies, at Yale University, with Professor J. M. Macfarlane as president. The following officers were elected for the ensuing year: president, D. P. Penhallow; vice presidents, Roland Thaxter and Erwin F. Smith; secretary-treasurer, W. F. Ganong. The following new members were elected: Oakes Ames, J. M. Coulter, Carrie M. Derick, B. M. Duggar, A. W. Evans, M. A. Howe, L. R.